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SOME NEW YORK INTERIORS.

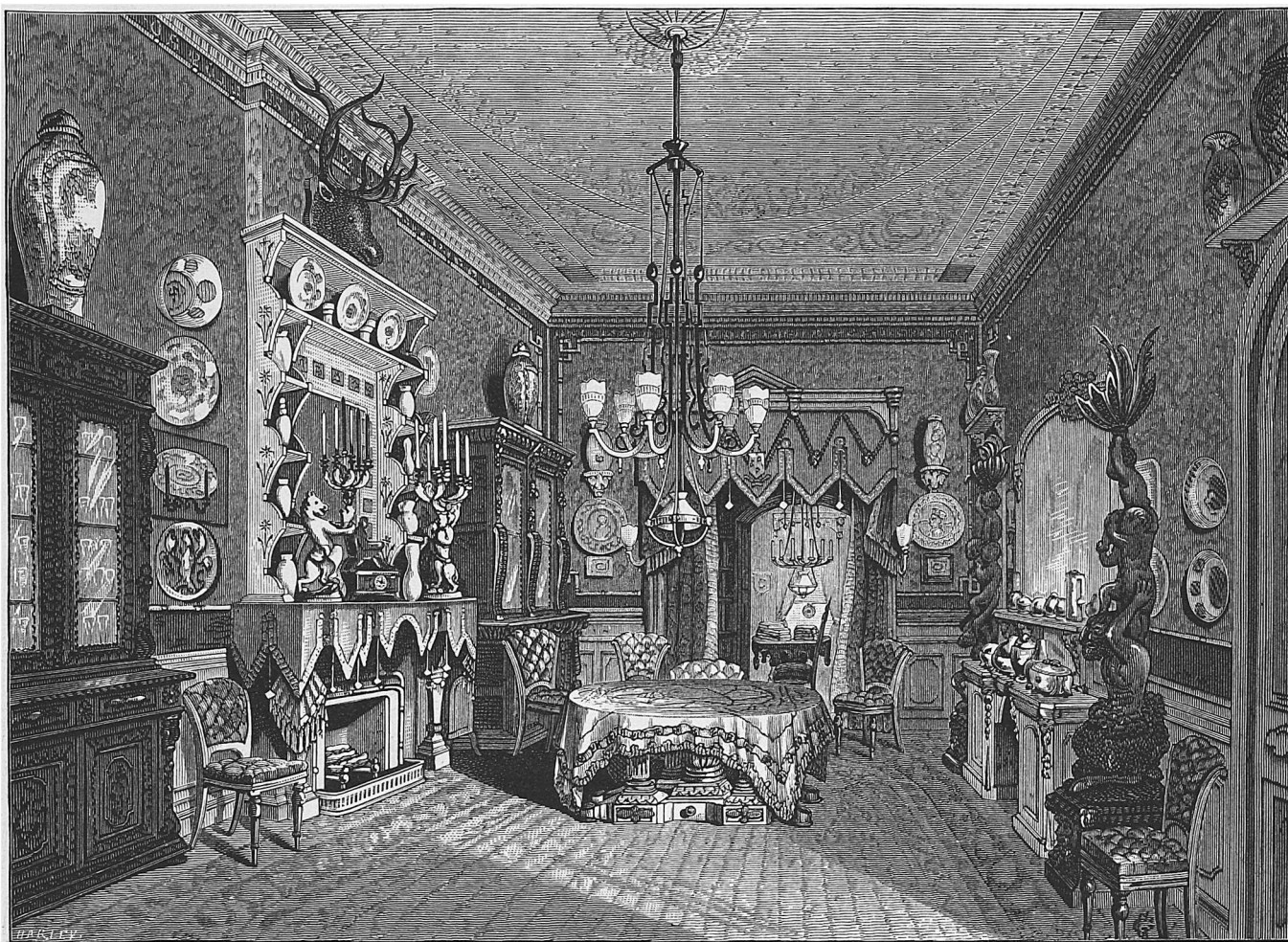
I.



MODERN author speaks eloquently of that unique moment between heroic and epicurean eras when men, having conquered, stop to enjoy. At such a moment "blossoms the delicate and transient flower of Art;" studied adornments are called in to gratify the senses, and to magnificently enliven the mind. The eye must rest on harmonious colour, the ear must be soothed by only softest sounds, the chair and sofa must gently receive the form of the pampered loung-er, and the wine must be poured from a flask which Hebe may

have handled, into a cup which Ganymede might have wreathed with vine-leaves. There is no limitation to the requirements of a tasteful human being; nothing is good enough for the man who determines to surround himself with the luxurious accumulation of the ages; colour and form are illimitable. Beauty has no latitude and longitude, no geographical boundaries—all is possible to him who holds Aladdin's lamp, now vulgarly known under the cabalistic word money!

And this unique moment seems to have come to our New World. We have passed our heroic age; we enter on our epicurean era.



Dining-Room of Dr. Hammond.

Houses begin to assume a patrician aspect. The man who has conquered fortune steps into his new house, to which every country, every artist, every age, the eighteen Christian centuries, and the unwritten centuries of the great Confucius, and Buddha himself, have all been made tributary. Beautiful, calm women perfectly dressed in brilliant attire, or in quiet, dove-coloured robes, move about these rooms as Victoria Colonna may have swept through her Italian palaces.

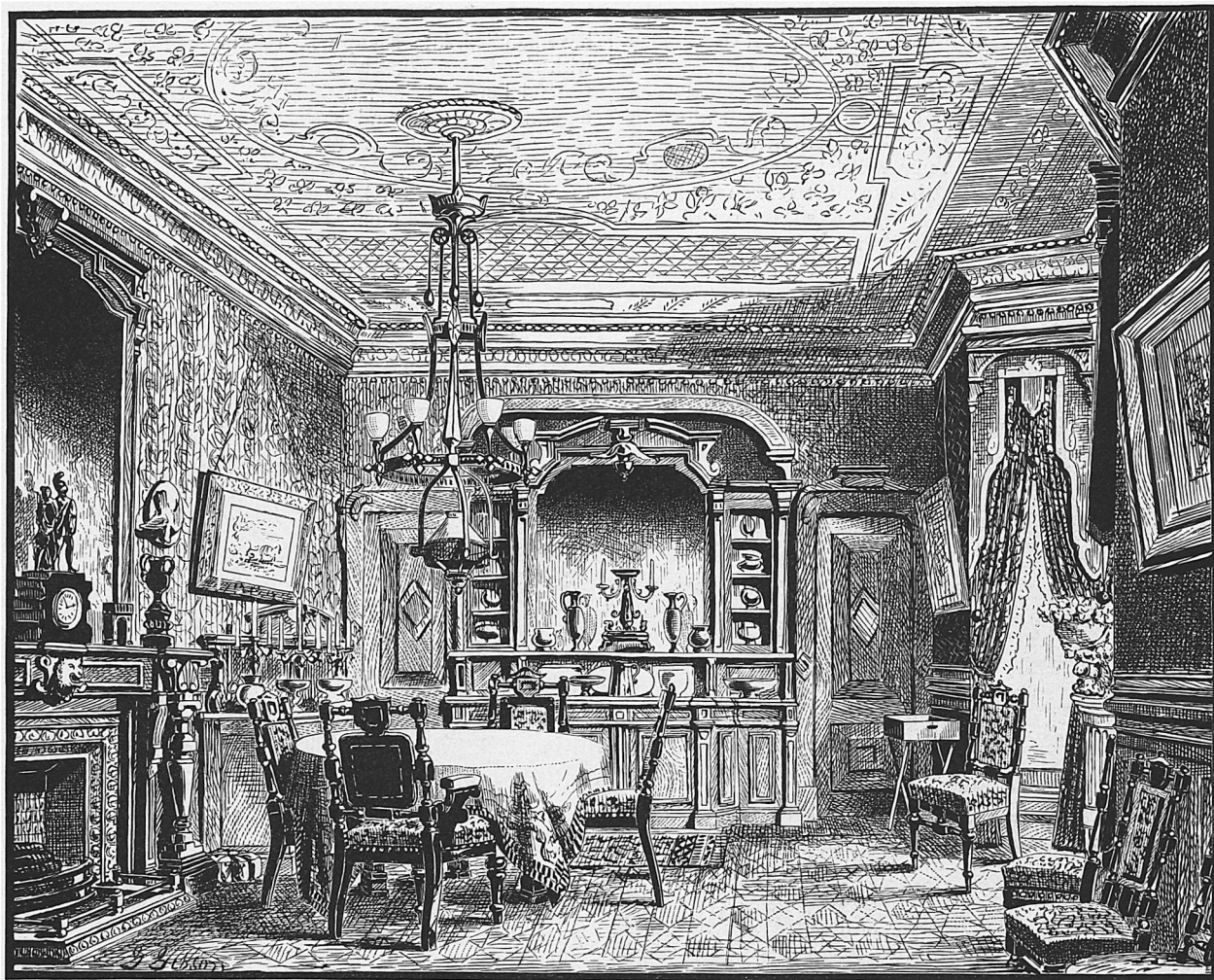
American interiors have followed fast in the wake of that progress towards a tasteful Renaissance which seems to have started with the pre-Raphaelite painters in England, and which, like all great reforms, had a kind of simultaneous sunrise in all lands. That wave which, amid much valuable flotsam and jetsam, threw up to us Eastlake's books, Morris's wall-papers, Doulton's pottery, tiles, fireplaces, and jugs; which taught us properly to appre-

ciate the sincerity and purpose of true Art—that wave has widely bathed the shores of "that New World which is the Old."

We, too, have developed architects of our own who possess surprising richness and sincerity of invention—notably, Furniss, of Philadelphia, and Hunt, of New York. Either of these men can create an interior true to the spirit of this age, and in the highest, best sense, enriched by the wise study of the past. All that Venice and Nuremberg will give up (there is a certain nameless charm which neither can surrender) these men have caught. We cannot import Lucretia Borgia's palace, but we can study the noble school which made such a gem possible; we cannot invoke Titian and Tintoretto and Paul Veronese to decorate our walls, but we can study and think, we can pray to and invoke that mediæval spirit which dignified labour, which made it poetical; we can study the great, agitated, passionate fourteenth century, with its tyranny,

tumult, and splendour, which left so many records of itself on the walls of Europe; and we can always turn to Nature, which holds for us, as for them, the corolla of the night-blooming cereus, the shape and colour of the cactus grandiflora, the bloom of the rose,

and the majestic simplicity of the calla lily. From all authorities of taste we learn that a room should have, first, comfort, warmth, harmony, and light; then colour and picturesque association. As man cannot live by bread alone, neither can splendour and luxury



Dining-Room of John W. Ellis, Esq.

suffice for his spiritual needs. His bronzes even must take immortal shapes; Mercury, on his heaven-kissing hill, must hold up the globe of light by which he reads his evening paper. The column of Trajan on his low book-desk must suggest solidity as he ruminates on the fluctuation of stocks; the crouching Venus, or she of Milo, must remind him how meritorious a thing is beauty. Even his paper-weight, which keeps in order his unanswered correspondence or his unpaid bills, should be the 'Dancing Faun,' an image of sufficient gaiety to banish reflection, bid dull Care be gone, or light up the morbid regrets which sometimes follow a good dinner.

"Not alone did Mecenas see the Augustan era." In some overloaded salons, however, we see porphyry and verde-antique columns, which suggest the luxury, and prodigality, and caprice of an Eastern monarch, who would bury his favourite beneath mantles of emerald-green velvet, caskets of jewels, flowers, perfumes, and spices. We see rooms sumptuously poor and magnificently ugly, marvels of labour to no purpose, expenditure splendidly unwise, all feeble and pretentious, and gigantic effort dwarfing itself.

Into this wilderness of suggestion, this opulence of decoration, should step Bunyan's four shepherds—"Knowledge, Experience, Watchful, and Sincere." Watchful should come first, and say, "Not too much;" Sincere should come next, and command: "Let your solid chairs stand on sound legs; let your columns hold up something, let your wool be wool, and your silk silk; let your silver be pure, your table-linen fine, your carpets thick, your wood real, and not 'might, could, would, or should be;' no veneering; misera-

ble word! give us a solid plank of its own colour." Then should come Knowledge; he must tell us where to go; he will send us to that rich, real, untaught, but naturally gifted intelligence of the East, for our carpets and our curtain-stuffs; untaught colourists with Eastern temperaments can never be surpassed. He will send us to the Japanese for our lacquer-work and screens, and our table-ware; he will send us to England for our patterns for tables and dining-room chairs—for a nation that has asked everybody to dinner for eight centuries ought to know how to make those articles—and to France for our clocks. For France, knowing better than any nation how to kill Time, has been practically engaged in bringing him to life in the gayest and most ornamental manner, since the days of the great artists of the fifteenth century down to Beaumarchais, "horlogiste du Roi," after whom the Art mounted the throne, and seized the unhappy monarch, Louis Seize, who tinkered watches when he was not hammering at locks! In all ages France has made beautiful clocks; the most fanciful, poetical, and learned designs for clocks, come from there. In fact, "Knowledge," that most invaluable shepherd of all Bunyan's troop, will tell us nearly every thing if we will only listen to him.

Then comes Experience: he is the shepherd whom it is most difficult to catch—we have generally built our house and lived in it several years before we meet him; but, if some one else has caught him, we may, perhaps, receive a few of his dry, useful, unimaginative hints.

Particularly does Experience advise us to look through the Ages, and garner up what they have dropped—for in the hurry of living

we all of us scatter some disregarded pearls; those who come after us will find that we have dropped and thrown away some things which are better than any we may have kept. Nothing is more beautiful in a luxurious and modern room than some even homely article of the past—some old chair which Time has upholstered with his own pictured *cretonne*; some honoured buffet, redolent of the priceless wine of a past hospitality; some antique table, into whose mahogany has entered the polish of Old World manners; some quaint silver tea-urn, whose bright surface keeps warm the image of faces now gone, never to return. These things furnish Memory's chambers, and protract those intimacies which Chance and Destiny have interrupted; they are the goblin tapestries of that invisible world which to us alone is visible; they halo our present with the dear dreams of the past; they lead us gently on to the future, as the mother's hand leads the child—safeguards, as well as present helps, adding legend and tradition to the history, we are now living.

And yet, in this taste for garnering up old things, we must again invoke our learned shepherd, Knowledge. We must not collect old things simply because they are old. Age of itself alone does not beautify undesirable things; they must have been beautiful and now rococo. As in all other cases, must we invoke Taste, that nymph who fled with other nymphs in 1789, before the horrors which were to come in the train of the French Revolution. That was the hour of exit for the Arts! After the demoralisation of the idea of home, consequent on so much exile and misery, the interiors of France became heathenised, as it were; and goddesses like Madame Récamier, in scanty Greek drapery, reclined on couches of antique design of sinister thinness, uncomfortable and wooden outlines, while their *salons* were furnished with spindle-legged chairs, and sideboards, and tables imitated from altars to Bacchus and Apollo, on which burned sacrifices that must have shocked the good taste of those deities. Nothing can be so cold, so poor to our modern ideas of comfort, as this particular



Library of John W. Ellis, Esq.

Renaissance of Napoleonic classicism, as seen in pictures and in the remnants extant of the furniture of the period. The importations into our country of this false taste must account for the thin-legged chairs, supported on impossible curves, the dreadful sofas,

the unworthy mirror-frames, the frightful carpets and curtains, which marked fifty years of American interiors.

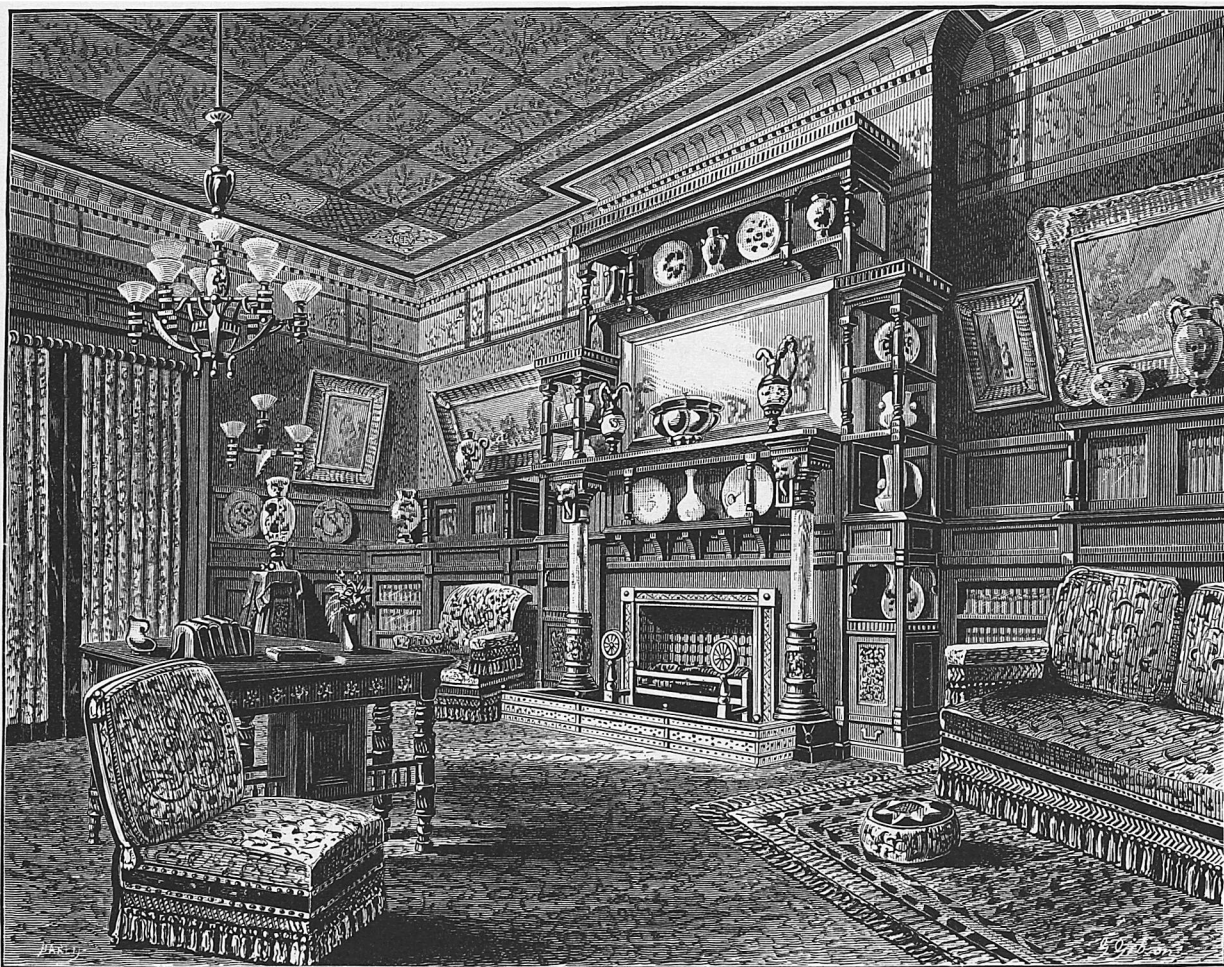
"Ignorance copying bad models" may serve as a terse description of American internal decoration up to the immediate decade

in which we live. But what a change has that brought to us! The fiat has gone forth that the *salon* shall be serene, superb, and silvery; the library dark, warm, magnificent—a pomegranate with golden seeds, or crimson, lighted up with steel colour; furniture as stately as Milton's speech, and pictures varied as Shakespeare's thought; while the dining-room shall be the beauty of the house, a brown Cleopatra, grand and alluring.

This room where we do our eating should be high and spacious, well aired and well lighted, furnished with solid chairs and heavy tables, broad sideboards, with a wood-fire to soften yet illuminate its splendours as the evening shades descend and the family come together after their day's work to eat and talk, to rest and to ruminate.

Such a one, as rich in decoration as it is proud in dimensions, is Dr. Hammond's, in his house in West Fifty-fourth Street. Thirty-six by sixteen feet, it affords scope for much. The walls are hung

with deep crimson or maroon leather stamped in gold, with the fanciful and chimerical animals of mediæval design, these being repeated in the adornment of the ceiling; a broad band of green defined with gold follows this leather hanging around, above, and below. Stamped leather lambrequins furnish the windows and doors. Carved buffets with fine paintings on leather, let in after the fashion of tiles, hold up the silver and china of the dinner-service. Dark-wood Cupids on the backs of Indian slaves (treasures of Venice, bought at Cyprus) form huge candelabra, which stand on one side of the buffet. Candelabra from Nancy, very choice old ware, officiate on the other side; while treasures of Delft, Japanese, old blue, and French plaques, are hung one above another. Elaborate brass scones, of real *cinq cent* and Henri II., enrich still further these illuminated walls. Around the border, with inscriptions in cufic or old Arabian characters, run mottoes, as "Good wine is a good familiar creature if not



Library of Oliver Harriman, Esq.

abused;" "Fames est optimus coquus;" "Ohne Hast, aber ohne Rast;" "Eis aner ondeis aner" (one man is no man); "Il n'est sauce que d'appétit," &c. These are in black and gold on a deep-red ground. This splendid room has such excellent combinations and oppositions of tones that the whole effect has an aerial lightness not to be expected amid such wealth of decoration. A fine effect is helped by the ceiling, which is light and clear; it is Renaissance of the fifteenth century, composed of capricious and chimerical animals, butterflies, stars, flowers, on a light gold-colour ground, very learned and beautiful. The scientific owner of all this has the power to cure brain-diseases and manias in others, but he has one which he cannot cure in himself. In an elegant little room, lighted from the top, he collects rare china, himself a hopeless china-maniac. Indeed, the principal decoration of the dining-room is its pottery. Moorish vases, where barbaric taste revels in complete liberty of colour; Japanese, fin-

ished and learned; French porcelain varied as the skies of Provence, while in the china-room is an old Kioto bowl beautifully painted with portraits of Japanese poets; Corean vases in form of lotus-leaves; Kaga-ware; *cloisonné* enamel on copper; curious fan-shaped trays; rare crackle-ware tray, raised on storks; green glaze; old celadon bottle with incised decoration of imperial dragon in gold; rare old Japanese porcelain deep plaque; Turkish cup with cover; pair of Thuringian porcelain vases, decorated with mermaids and sea-monsters in relief; very rare Moorish fire-vase; Russian biscuit-figure; fine old Dresden; ancient Peruvian jar; Hungarian porcelain teacup; yellow-china porcelain; pair of Luxemburg dishes; old Satsuma bowls, and what not, that the china-maniac loves; Nanking porcelain; antique Kioto; majolica; Spanish *faïence*; Palissy; old Austrian beer-jugs; Peruvian earthenware from ancient tombs; old German painted goblet; Egyptian water-bottle; Etruscan vases—who does not know the

distracting sounds as this fascinating study opens up to its votaries all countries and the study of man since Adam made a little cup for Cain to drink out of?

Dr. Hammond has some thousands of pieces—already a very meritorious collection! What will it not be before he stops?

It would be pleasing to go on and describe other rooms in this beautiful house—an Egyptian room, carefully composed from Champollion and Wilkinson, reminding one of Théophile Gautier's "Romance of the Mummy," the lotus produced in every rare form, the scarabæus, the priest with horned head-dress on the man-

tel-piece, the strange processions of slaves driving horses (from the pyramids), this room only needs Story's 'Cleopatra' to be perfect, "that serpent of old Nile" should drag her grace thither; the hall in vermillion and dead gold; the drawing-room with its Celtic ceiling, its copy of the Bayeux tapestry, its tasteful and ingenious decoration—all of which is done by an artist named Ingles, of whom Dr. Hammond speaks very highly, under Hill and Treharne. Their work speaks for them volumes.

In the handsome house of Mr. John W. Ellis we find that taste, knowledge, sincerity, and munificence, have gone hand-in-hand.



Dining-room of Oliver Harriman, Esq.

The house from the vestibule to the garret is finished and elegant, quiet and thorough. The *salon* is "serene, superb, and simple;" the dining-room spacious and hospitable. Brown is the prevailing tint—brown-leather hangings, brown-leather lambrequins with monogram of gold; a deep, beautiful bay-window, in which stands a white-marble vase crowned with grapes; dark, polished woods; inlaid chairs of English breadth and solidity, in brown leather and dark wood; a mantel-piece with fine cartouche and figures, and a bright, pretty green and gold tile fireplace, which lights up the room. The ceiling is Renaissance, with broad cartouches in brown and green, the groundwork pale buff. A mighty sideboard,

well filled with silver and monogram glass, fills one side of the room. French paintings and engravings hang on the walls. It is ornamented by Marcotte, and does him credit. The library is dark and ruddy, with ruby-velvet carpet and hangings, a paper of dead gold and bronze, with rosewood finishings to windows, doors, and bookcases. The chandelier is of dark-green bronze, as are the many reproductions of the classic bronzes which ornament the rooms. Pictures hang on the walls and stand about on easels; a fireplace in polished steel glitters like diamonds in this mass of colour. The dark crimson and gold, the deep chairs, and the luxurious lounges, make this room a delightful resting-place for the visitor, opening as

it does out of a *salon* which is all silver and blue, with an occasional gleam of pale gold, a very elegant room of extensive dimensions, lighted by crystal chandeliers.

Mr. Oliver Harriman's house has the merit of breadth, being fifty feet wide. It would be difficult to convey the rich effect of its splendid interior as it first bursts upon one. It is worthy of a word which should be used sparingly—it is gorgeous. The library hung with Algerine *portières*, carpeted with Turkey rugs; the furniture covered with the most splendid stuffs of the East; the inlaid woodwork, the taste, usefulness, and Eastlake simplicity of the mantel-piece, which is an *étagère* for china as well as mantel-piece and decorative shelf—all is superb. The colours are varied in this room. It has an Asiatic splendour and license, and a European elegance. Comfort is included in every detail, from the broad, low sofa, the warm, rich, velvet-bound *portière*, up to the ceiling, which is Byzantine in decoration, and suits the character of the room. The dining-room, sharing in the magnificent proportions of the house, is fifty feet wide; the beauty of the inlaid woodwork, the gorgeous effect of the *portières* and curtains, which are of the richest brocaded Chinese silk, the handsome solid effect of the carved sideboard, the plaques, vases, and brasses, which add to the effect, all make this noble room worthy to be compared to an English dining-room in some great ducal house, and no higher praise can be given to any room than that.

Does it take nineteen centuries to know how to build a house? Would it be unfair to suggest that these American houses have something which all the models have not? They have an adaptability to the climate and time, which perhaps the Italian palace had not, which certainly the French houses of the present time have not. Who ever tried to get a bath in Paris, that did not regret the hot and cold water of our New York houses?

Even in England, that home of comfort and luxury, there is sometimes a sigh for the silent slaves of the ring, who bring us light and warmth and water; and, as for our decorations, whence do they come? In the illuminated missals of the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries, do we find the designs for most of these elaborate and beautiful ceilings of the present day. Some barefooted

monk in a lonely cell devised out of the poetic depth of his imagination designs for borders and scrolls which, put on a modern ceiling, bear scrutiny to-day in the Fifth Avenue.

The Saracens conquered the Byzantines, and, as is often the case, carried off the art and civilisation of the conquered race, built the Alhambra, and gave us arabesques. We would fain gather from their natural and inherited taste such ideas as we can carry away; and yet what one of them lived in such comfort as the man of to-day finds in his house? To be sure, their splashing fountains would have been very pleasant on a hot summer day, but the wind blows cold in Granada sometimes: what provision had they against that? The marble floors of Venice are very cold, the old palaces are often open to rats and mice, and such small deer, and were even in those days when an army of servitors kept them in order. The early British gave us that Celtic style of ornamentation, full of conceit, the interlacing of ribbons and circles, architectural and mathematical combinations, which to-day decorates a ceiling that is peerless; but what did they know about comfort?

Thus, the art of living is progressive: the study of all the ages goes toward making up one interior; we take from the savage races and from the learned races; we indulge in the grotesque if fancy so suggest (and that tendency to soar away from the real is strongly developed in nations in which the elements of civilisation are so heterogeneous as in ours). The result of all this combination is marvellous. We have *built in* cleanliness and comfort; behind our arabesques our smoke ascends; our windows give us light, our chimneys draw: all, but the hot furnace with which we bake ourselves in winter, is to be commended. That is infamous and unhealthful, and should be abolished; but for comfort, beauty, durability, and taste, these houses of New York may bear comparison with any in the world. They but need yet one sanctifying and ennobling touch: one artist must finish them after Marcotte; one great painter must add that light which "never was on sea or land;" one sculptor must round the outlines and define the scroll, and then they will be perfect—and the name of this great artist is Time.

M. E. W. S.

THE USE OF ANIMAL FORMS IN ORNAMENTAL ART.

By F. EDWARD HULME, F.L.S., F.S.A.

CHAPTER V.



HAVING in our preceding chapter dwelt at some little length upon the use of the eagle, vulture, and pelican, we now proceed to a consideration of the circumstances under which we find the swan, cock, peacock, owl, and some other less common animal forms. The swan figures in a few classic myths, and may, therefore, be met with from time to time in classic Art; a very good example of its use was given among the illustrations of our last paper. Leda was visited by Jupiter in the form of a swan; and it is also introduced as one of the attributes of Venus or Aphrodite, who is frequently represented as drawn in a chariot by swans or doves. The British Museum affords several illustrations of this. The swan is not so frequently met with in heraldry as many other bird-forms; it was, however, the badge of the house of Cleves, in allusion to an old family legend which we need scarcely here detail; and it was also adopted by Clement IX., with the motto "*Cum candore canore*," in allusion to the snowy purity of the colour of its plumage and to the myth of the song of the dying swan. It is also the attribute of St. Hugh and St. Cuthbert. One old writer, however, whose book we consulted, declares that "swans are looked upon as symbols of hypocrisy, because they have fine wings, and yet can scarce raise themselves from the earth, so that they are of no use to them; besides, the feathers of a swan are white to perfection, but their flesh is very black, as are the hypocrites, appearing outwardly very virtuous, and being inwardly very wicked." It is one of the devices found on Greek coins.

The vigilance and pugnacity of the cock have made the bird a favourite symbol of watchfulness and valour. In Christian Art it is mainly associated with St. Peter. Guillim, an old writer on heraldry, calls the cock "the knight among birds, being both of noble courage and also prepared evermore to the battle, having his comb for a helmet, his sharp and hooked bill for a falchion to slash and wound his enemy;" while Coats, another of the ancients, affirms that "the cock is the emblem of strife, of quarrels, of haughtiness, and of victory, because he rather chooses to die than yield, for which reason Aristophanes calls him the bird of Mars; and the Dardanians, to express that they did not shun giving battle, caused two cocks, fighting, to be stamped upon their coin." It was also adopted by the Gauls as their standard, and its plumage as a crest. The cock was by the Greeks and Romans dedicated to Apollo, because he gives warning of his approach at daybreak; and to Mercury as an emblem of watchfulness. It was also, like the serpent, one of the attributes of Æsculapius. Our readers will remember that Socrates, after taking the deadly draught, sacrificed a cock to that deity. Cocks are also regarded with veneration by the Japanese, and are carefully tended in the enclosures of the temples. They are very frequently met with in Japanese Art. Examples of their use may be seen in the South Kensington collection.

The hen and chickens, as an emblem of God's providence, is sometimes met with in old sculptures on ecclesiastical buildings. Their use evidently springs from that passage in the Bible that shows us the infinitely tender Redeemer mourning over the guilty city, and declaring that, had its inhabitants so willed it, God's good providence would have been to them a shield and sure defence, an